

THE LIFE

— OF —

MICAJAH ANDERSON,

OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY.

BY HIMSELF.

Written from Dictation,

BY BENJAMIN JOHNSON, COLORED,
OF LOGSBORO TOWNSHIP.

JARBORO. N. C.:

From Wm. A. Hearne's Printing and Publishing House, Main Street.

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INTRODUCTION.

This book is written and published in the sixty-seventh year of my age.

In giving the main facts and incidents relative to my last wife, I do so in a spirit of regret, rather than with a feeling of malice; and while I cannot hope to remove or lessen the great sorrow which has overtaken me in my old age, I trust that what I say in this book is enough to vindicate me in the eyes of the world, and justify my conduct before men.

The Lord has spared me to this time of life, and for his goodness and mercy to me, I feel that it is my duty to give to the world some record of a life that has not been without incident, as it has also been full of trial and tribulation, but not without the great blessing of much pleasure, and a share of worldly prosperity to reward my many days of honest toil. Affection has been mine too, for I have known the love of two faithful wives and twelve children.

I have long felt that I was called to come out from the world and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I now feel that I am commanded to do this work, and I should never be content to live, or die satisfied if I did not perform it to the best of my ability.

So in a spirit of Christian love I enter upon this task, dedicating my work to all such as fear the Lord and love one another.

MICAJAH ANDERSON.

EDGECOMBE COUNTY, N. C., June, 1870.

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THE LIFE

— OF —

MICAJAH ANDERSON.

I WAS born in Edgecombe county, October, 1803, of very poor and humble parents. Indeed, I suppose I came into the world as poor as any one who ever lived in it. My first recollection of my mother (my father died when I was quite young) was that she was toiling day and night for the support of myself and brothers and sisters, of which there were two girls older, and two boys and a girl younger than myself; and the first work I ever did was on the spinning-wheel, assisting my mother, when I could not have been more than five or six years old.

One day, when I was about six or seven years old, my mother went out to carry home some work she had done for a neighbor, leaving me at home with my baby brother, who was just able to sit alone. We were living in a log house with a dirt floor, and a few boards across the joists which was called a loft. We were both crying of hunger, as we had often cried before, when I heard a voice, which seemed to come through the opening of the loft, saying:—"Watch the world and strive, and you shall live!" Startled by this unexpected voice in so strange a place, I looked up to see if there was

not somebody in the loft, but finding no one, my young heart became filled with wonder, and as young as I was I thought it must be the voice of the Lord God, and I hushed my baby brother—and from that day I bore my lot uncomplainingly, and became a dutiful child, working faithfully for my mother until I was twenty-one years old, a period of unceasing toil with me, but not remarkable for any incident worthy of mention here.

On the twenty-first day of October, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-four, I became twenty-one years of age, and on the night of the twenty-fifth, following, I was married to my first wife, Nancy Newsom.

At this time I had not so much as a bed of my own, nor anything to live on only as I earned it, but we both went to work, and we lived in love, peace and prosperity seventeen years, three months and ten days, when it was God's will to part us. My earthly substance at her death was, I suppose, about two thousand five hundred dollars, that we had together accumulated.

About two years before the death of my wife, I was brought to see my lost condition, and to know that

where God and Christ was, I could not go. This disturbed me so I could take no rest, and I thought I would try and pray, but it appeared to me that the more I tried to pray the worse I got, and in September that my wife died in January, following, I lay down one night but could not close my eyes in sleep for fear that I should never wake again. I was living at the Avington place on Fishing Creek, and on the occasion here alluded to, my wife was sitting up before the fire. Pretty soon after laying down I heard music like a fiddle playing up stairs, and I thought some one asked me who is that playing the fiddle, and I replied that it was James Avington, and immediately I saw a flame of fire in the east, and as I saw it I jumped up out of bed and ran to shut the door to keep the fire out of the house. As I was going I saw four men coming down stairs but I did not know any of them except James Avington, and I had never had any acquaintance with him. As I reached the door my wife rose from the fire place, and laying hold of me, asked what was the matter with me, I replied nothing. She answered: "Yes there is, and has been for some time, and I want you to tell me what it is." But I insisted that there was nothing, and went and laid down again. I never did tell her what I saw and felt that night, and she died and left me here in that way, and it seemed to me that after her death I was worse, for I was as

much concerned about her poor soul as my own, and as anxious to know what had become of her, as I was to know what would become of me.

About ten days after her death I was taken down sick, and it was thought that I would die also, and I felt that if I did, my soul would be forever lost, and it appeared to me that I could not live but for the beautiful hymns I heard, the sweetest sounds I had ever listened to, and which gave me hope that there was still some promise for me some time or other, and so I recovered from my sickness.

About the middle of July of the same year I retired one night praying to Almighty God to show me whether my wife was saved or not, and I was carried into a place about a half acre in size and as round as a drum, and I appeared to be shut up in this dark place with no chance of escape, and I looked and beheld my wife in a beautiful place, seeming to me the most happy state of existence that I ever saw with my eyes, and I struggled hard to make my way to her, and I thought I got near enough to speak to her, and I said "Nancy, I want to lay my hand on your pretty head;" but she answered, "you can't do that, 'Cajah," and in reply to my question why not, she said it was because of some of my misconduct to her when living. Immediately a door leading into this beautiful place was opened and I was taken in, and turning to my right I went straight to her, and

laid my hand on her head, and this was the happiest moment I ever experienced in my life, and I thought and hoped that it would last me always. But since that time it has been shown to me that I was not to live that life while in this sinful and wicked world, and I became so desirous of living that life, I prayed to the Lord both night and day that I might so live here as to live that life hereafter.

One day I was going from where I live to the plantation, and there came a voice to me saying that I had never done the first good deed in my life. This was a most distressing time to me, and I begged and prayed Almighty God, there, to show me the right way and to help me do what was right. I was going on from my house about a month and a half afterwards, and another voice seemed to come to me that what had been done for me I did not do myself, and that I need not expect to live in this world as though I was in the world above, for I could not; and I then felt, that I was and profess now to be, an old hard-shell Baptist at heart; but as St. Paul says: "The things that I would do, I do not, and the things that I would not do, that I do, then it is no more I that do it, but sin that is in the flesh."

I do not want any one to think or say that I write this to hurt the feelings of the church, or the feelings of anyone, but I do this to show the world the life that I have spent,

how I lived two years, five months and seventeen days, up to the time I married Harriet Faithful, my second wife.

When I was married the second time, I carried my wife home, and she took hold of the same end of the rope that my first wife had turned loose by death, and we lived together twenty years, five months and seventeen days, and we throve as fast as two house pigs put up to fatten.

In her lifetime we often talked together about our future state, and I would ask her if she was willing for me to offer to the church, and she always said she was, and she would be glad if it was the will of God that she might go with me, and that was the reason that I never offered in her lifetime, for I lived in hopes that she would come sometime, but she died and never did.

At the death of my second wife I suppose I was worth twenty thousand dollars in money and other property. I make this statement to show what she and I did in her lifetime, and in the time of her life we were, including ourselves, twenty-seven in family. She was the mother of nine children, seven boys and two girls, and eight of them were living at her death, which with four left by my first wife, made twelve living children to me—eight sons and four daughters. Now I have five living sons and four daughters, but am only four in family. I have lived to raise them all and

they are gone out from me to fill their places in the world. I tried to raise them to know how to get their living by the "sweat of their brow," according to the laws of their maker, for this is the way I got my living, for no man or woman has ever left me a cent, and I feel quite certain none never will. I have enough to last me as long as I shall live, and I can truly say that all I have or ever had given to me was a gift from Almighty God, "from whom all blessings flow."

Four months after the death of my second wife, I married her own cousin, widow of Edward Fountain—maiden name Mary Eliza Pittman. She had one child, a girl, named Mary Williford Fountain. It is now six years since I last married, and although I have been married three times, I have had but two wives, for the last woman I married never has been any wife to me at all. She was the worst enemy, and most bitter foe to me I have ever had in all the days of my life. She is a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and belongs to the church at Williams' meeting house.

I had been acquainted with her for several years, knew her as a member of the church and regarded her as a christian woman, so I went to see her, thinking that she would make a good wife to me, and I told her that I had loved her as a christian and felt that I would love her as a wife. We were married, and on our way home she said there was

one request she had to make, that I never would prevent her from going to preaching. I assured her that I never would, and that it was the very last thing I could think of doing; further told her that I hoped it would not be long before I should go into the church with her. She seemed satisfied, and expressed the hope that I might soon become a member.

On the morning of the sixth day after we were married, I went into the garden to prepare a place for bedding potatoes, which I selected, and by the time we had got it ready breakfast was announced, after finishing which I remarked to her that I had put some eating potatoes in the hill with the plantings, and wanted her and the children to come into the garden and pick them out and take care of them. With her little girl and my two little daughters she came after a while, but had not been there long before I had occasion to scold the boys at work, both white and black, for playing around the bed and idling their time; when she flew into a passion and said if there was to be a fuss on the plantation about work, she would leave, but I paid no attention to what she said, and went on to complete my work.

When she first came to my house she told my two little girls that she was going to learn them to card and spin. But she had no time to do so, and I did not expect her to do it, but her daughter was old enough

and large enough to learn them ; but she would neither work herself or show the others how, nor her mother never tried to make her do anything. One day I reminded my wife that she had promised to teach my girls how to work, and she replied in a violent fit of anger that she would when she got a chance ; and so for a month, and better, things went on, and I named to her again that I thought she was going to put the children to work, and that I could not stand their idleness any longer. She then affirmed that the children should not have her cards to abuse and wear out, and I told her there were some cards in the press, I thought, and if there was not, why I would get some, and then she took the cards and set my oldest daughter to spinning and her's to carding. When she first began I suppose she carded about one ounce a day, and from that she got down to a quill a day, and from that to nothing.

Finding that my wife would do nothing for the instruction of my little girls, but on the contrary encouraged her daughter to idleness, thereby laying a bad example for my children whom I was anxious should be raised to habits of industry, I, one evening, weighed me out two ounces of cotton and that night carded it myself. The next morning I took the rolls to the wheel, fixed one on, and called my little girl to come and let me learn her how to spin. She began to cry,

but I hushed her, and then her step-mother fell into one of her violent fits of anger, and said that the child would not be put on in this way if her mother had lived, that putting her to work this way would not have been thought of in her life time. I reasoned with her calmly that she ought not to set such examples before the children, that she knew they ought to be at work, and that their mother had several months ago spoken to William Weeks for a little wheel for them, which was done at her death. But she would not hear to reason, became more violent and declared that I was only pursuing this course to make little of her before the children and the servants on the place. I told her I did it that my children might be taught to work, and that as no one else would I must teach them myself. With that her daughter declared she would not work, that there were negroes enough on the plantation to do all the work ; and her mother ripped out that she should not work, that she did not come there to work but to live a fine lady, and she intended that she should be raised one.

From anything I may say in this book of another, the reader must not infer that I claim perfection for myself. On the contrary, it must be remembered that I have been a bad man—as far from perfection as it was possible for most men to be, and I could not consent to speak of the faults of another, without mak-

ing full acknowledgments of my own short-comings. And I also make the further acknowledgement, that in the differences and difficulties between my last wife and myself, I was often as much in fault as she was, but I desired to do right, and tried to live in peace and harmony with her, and would have done so, had she been as ready to overlook my faults as I was to acknowledge them; as ready to own herself in the wrong, as I was to forgive her.

And I owe it to the sacred memory of my two first companions to say here that, my conduct, often in their life-time, was enough to have tried a saint, and but for their kind and forgiving natures, under the severest trials and provocations, I must have fallen, long ago, beneath the weight of wrongs wrought by my own hands; and in recognizing the sorrow that has overtaken me in my old age, the hand of God laid upon me for the offences of my earlier years, with an humble and contrite spirit, I acknowledge His great goodness, His perfect justice and loving kindness to the wayward sinner, among whom, as St. Paul says, "I am chief."

God grant the tears of grief that water eyes already dimmed by years, that flow from a heart withered by time and bowed beneath a load of sorrow, may atone for misspent years; and may my afflictions finally prove my salvation; for the Lord is good, and "hath no pleasure in

the death of him that dies." And when our pilgrimage on earth is ended, may we, who have been so rudely separated on earth, so unhappily mated in this life, meet in Heaven to share the joys of eternal life; and may they who have been so ready to magnify the differences, and widen the breach between myself and her whom I solemnly vowed to love, honor and protect, find that forgiveness in Heaven which I shall leave them here. For, "with malice for none and charity for all," I shall leave this world, cherishing for mankind feelings of the most perfect love and friendship.

The next night I weighed me out some more cotton, and went in one of the rooms of the house to card it, leaving her in the other room. Patrick Lawrence was there that night, and heard everything that passed between us. Eliza began to talk in great wrath, and said, among other things, that she did not intend to remain with me any longer, for what I was then doing was only to make little of her; that the work I was about would not pay for the wearing out of my breeches. I told her that if I wore out my breeches, they cost her nothing; and I kept on until I had carded upwards of five pounds of cotton, and by this time the oldest of the two girls had learned how, and I then told her she must learn her sister to card and spin, which she did, keeping their work separate, which I locked up to show how much each one did. In

the meantime, Eliza's daughter was doing nothing but idling about, studying to make mischief between her mother, myself and the rest of the family. I have known this daughter to misplace some article of her own or her mother's, thimble or scissors, for instance, and declare, in the most innocent yet earnest manner that they were lost, or that some member of the family had had them, and after pretending to look everywhere in the most anxious manner imaginable, and after making all the disturbance she could in this way, she would find the missing article, when she and her mother would both declare that some one about the house was always interfering with their work, hiding their things and trying to tease the life out of them.

When I would be called off from home, to town for instance, this girl was busy the live long day to invent some story to tell her mother against my return, and the moment she would see me coming home, she would run to her mother saying, "mother, papa is drunk; papa is drunk, mother."

They would then take themselves both off to old aunt Polly Pittman's, who was Eliza's step-mother, widow of her father, and there they would generally remain all night, telling everybody they saw, that I was at home dead drunk.

My son, Micajah, first married a daughter of this Mrs. Pittman, but she died, and he was married again,

and when he was killed in the war, he had by both of his wives seven children, and five of these, with their grandmother, Mrs. Pittman, I settled on my premises to take care of. The house in which Mrs. Pittman and her and my grandchildren lived, was about one hundred and fifty yards from my residence, and there Eliza spent most of her time, preferring the company of her step-mother to mine. If anyone came to visit at my house, Eliza would take them to Mrs. Pittman's, hardly allowing them to spend any time at all with me, and if she did not remain away all night, she would return home at a late hour, going to bed as softly as she could; never speaking to me if she could help it.

On the morning succeeding these visits, she would rise early, with one of her fits of passion on her, and you might hear her tongue all over the plantation. She has been heard in one of these outbreaks of anger at Mrs. Lane's which is more than a quarter of a mile from my house, and she scandalized the neighborhood, and alarmed every body with the tormenting noise of her fiery tongue.

I have tried to talk to her, and prevail on her to control her temper; that my feelings were hurt to the shedding of tears by such conduct, and that I could not stand it; and when I would attempt to reason with her thus, she would place her hands on her hips and walk off, uttering no word but "pshaw,

pshaw;” and instead of trying to improve, she seemed to get many times worse.

At my meals I had no peace, she was forever flinging out some sharp words at meal time, to wound my feelings, make me mad, and keep me away from the table. When, on occasions of this kind I reproved her, the best I knew how, and with as little show of anger as possible, she would turn her back on me, lean her head on her arms up against the mantel piece, and speak not a word as long as I remained in the house, but the moment I was gone, she would begin to scold and quarrel after me.

One day after dinner, I took a seat near the kitchen door, and her daughter came and sprung on the kitchen door and slammed the milk house door four times. One of my grand-daughters came and did the same thing, when I remarked to them, it was a pity they could not break it down, and then the door would be already open, for I had never seen a door opened and shut so much in my life. Eliza hearing me, came to the door and said she could never send to look for anything without a fuss; and I replied that she did not stay at home long enough to look for anything.—Whereupon, she flew up and said if she had ever eaten any stolen meat, she had eaten it at my house. I jumped up, angry myself now, and went into the kitchen, and asked her if she had ever eaten any

stolen meat, or anything else stolen at my house. She said she had not, and the reason she spoke as she did, was because some one had said that two very large hogs I had were stolen. Had she intimated again that I had stolen anything, I will confess here, that I should have struck her, though I did not threaten anything of the kind on the occasion. After this, it was four weeks that we never spoke to each other, and I never intended to speak again unless she asked my pardon.

This was about the second week in November, and she and her daughter began to carry her things to Betsey Pittman's, unknown to me, but I found out what they were doing, but did not let them know that I suspected anything of the kind. One morning early, after a cold rain the night before, she started off with a turn, barefooted. After going about a quarter of a mile, she came back, and went into the kitchen, shivering with cold and took a seat before the fire. The cook told her that she would kill herself; and she replied she did not care if she did. In about five minutes after she had thus spoken, they had to take her up and put her to bed. I was sent for to come to the house, that Eliza was dying, and I opened my mouth to tell the boy not to go for the doctor, but let her die, but my conscience rebuked me, and I felt that I ought to return good for evil, and I sent for the doctor in great haste. In the mean-

time, I went to her and found that she was as cold as ice, and the only way I could discover she had any life in her, was by placing my hand on her heart. I had some hot bricks placed around her, and getting some brandy, opened her mouth and gave her about half of a large glass full. She remained speechless and insensible for some time longer, when I gave her some more of the brandy, and in a little while she began to revive, and by the time the doctor got there she could talk.

The doctor advised me to continue giving her stimulants, and left some medicine for her. I was just as attentive as I knew how to be, and she felt it, for in helping her to turn over one day, she threw her arms around my neck, and begged me to forgive her. I told her I should forgive her, but I could not forget her; and I asked her why she said what she did the last time we had spoken, and she replied that she did not believe that I had stolen anything, but that she said so because she was angry at having heard that I accused her of stealing from me. I assured her that I never had thought of such a thing, for what was mine was hers, and it would be impossible for her to steal from herself. I then begged her not to let anything so unpleasant take place between us again. She said it should not, but from that day we would live as a dutiful and loving man and wife should.

As soon as she got up again, Charlotte Pittman asked her if she was going to leave. She said she was not; that I had asked her to forgive me, and she had done so, and I had forgiven her. But this did not last long. The first outbreak after our reconciliation was about soap.

When I first carried her home, I had a barrel, holding some thirty-two or three gallons, that had been, as was my custom once a year, filled with soap made at home.—But by lending and giving as she did, the soap was out before it should have been half gone, and then she informed me of the fact by telling me that I must get some concentrated lye. I told her that I never had bought any soap or concentrated lye, and never should; and if the soap had been properly taken care of, there would be plenty still on hand. She declared that our clothes might drop off us then, for she would not wash any more until I got some soap or some concentrated lye. But she managed to wash through the balance of the year, when I had ashes prepared for another year's supply of soap.

Now, my wife began to worry me by the manner in which she managed the table. When anything was cooked she would select the most choice pieces of whatever was prepared, and lock it up in the milk house, and neither I or my little girls could get anything out of there, but her daughter could go when

and as often as she pleased, but if mine came round they were driven off, and told that there was nothing for them. Visitors were treated to the best from the milk house or dairy, but me and my children were refused everything but such as we could get.

None of the negroes were fed from the kitchen but the cook, and she was given or took just what she wanted. She had a son living about a mile from my house, named Lewis Hines, the same that was hung in Tarboro last January for committing a rape on a young lady in the county. He came to my house almost every night with his tin bucket to be filled with provisions, and when his mother did not have anything to give him, he would come up to the yard fence, and Eliza would go out to him and taking his bucket to the milk house, fill and return it to him. I afterwards learned that the year before he lived so near me, he used to come with his bucket from Mr. David Bulluck's, but at the time all this was going on I had no idea of such a thing.

During a heavy freshet in the creek, considerable of my fence was washed away, and the rails were carried on the land of Betsey Pittman, and her son, Redding, took my rails out of his field, and used them on his own fence. I knew the rails when I saw them, for they were new ones. I saw him about the matter, and told him that he

must never use any rails of mine again that came on his land, even if the water should carry off every rail he had on his plantation.

My wife, Eliza, was Redding Pittman's own aunt, and when I happened to mention that Redding had taken my rails and left me without any, and I thought it very mean in him, she bursted out that it would never have been done, had I been a man of my word; and when I asked what she meant, she replied that I did not let Redding have that land as I promised. I admitted that I did not let him have the land, because he did not come up to his promise, and he did not come to me about it afterwards as a man should. He approached me on the streets of Tarboro, in company with his cousin Joseph Pittman, but I did not consider that he had complied with the contract, nor did I believe he would, so I refused to have anything to do further in the matter, for which he abused me very much.

When Eliza found that I would not let Redding have the land, she began to kick up a great dust.—She said her first husband was a smart man, and a man of his word, and so was her father. She went on in this way at great length, until I ordered her to shut up, and went and laid down, as it was getting late in the night, but she kept on in her usual style for sometime. After awhile she came to bed, but had scarcely laid down, before she

opened on me again by saying she and hers, had never stole a pocket handkerchief, and I said to her, in great anger, I admit, that if she did not stop going on in that way, I should certainly punish her, and as I moved on the bed, she jumped out, declaring that I had struck her. I asked her then if she ever knew me or mine to steal a handkerchief, and she replied it had been done; and upon further questioning, she said that one of my little girls had stolen Betsey Pittman's handkerchief.

Upon inquiry, I ascertained that my little girl had found a handkerchief belonging to some one, and put it in a pocket of one of her dresses that hung up in her room; that she told her step-mother about it, and Betsey Pittman afterwards claimed it.

Some time before this, I discovered that some one had been going in my chest, and I could not account for it, as I had the keys in my pocket. I then counted my money, which I kept in there. One Saturday morning, I returned from feeding my hogs, and found Eliza and her daughter gone to preaching at William's meeting house, and going to my chest found it unlocked, and taking out my pocketbook, I found that one five dollar note was missing. I could not think how this was, for I always carried the keys in my pocket, and it occurred to me that there were a great many small keys about the house, and that some

of the children had got one that fitted to the lock, but I could find no key anywhere that would open the chest. I remembered that Eliza had lately been to the store and got a new trunk, and I went to the trunk and with my chest key, unlocked it. I locked the trunk again, and said nothing about my discovery. I thought I would hold the knowledge I had gained over Eliza as a sort of check to her conduct, if I found it necessary to mention it, but I wished to keep the matter a secret, never to go beyond us two. So when she began to accuse my child of stealing, I asked her who it was that went into my chest and took out five dollars of my money. She stoutly denied any knowledge of the circumstance, and affirmed that it was neither she nor hers. I told her that I was not so sure about that, and here the matter ended for that night; and I indulged the hope that I should have peace and quiet at home thereafter.

But the next day, as I was boxing up some meat I had promised Elder Robert Hart, Betsey Pittman with Joe Pittman's wife, I think, came to my house, and walked into the kitchen where Eliza was. I could not understand what Eliza was saying in the conversation they carried on, but I distinctly heard Betsey say, "Lord, aunt Eliza, how do you stand it?"

Dinner was pretty soon announced, and I was called to go in, but I did not go, for my heart and

stomach was full enough without eating dinner.

After a little, Betsey and Joe's wife came out in the yard where I was, and asked me how I did. I told them I did not do well. That I was not so well in body, and my mind was terribly upset, for her aunt Eliza's conduct was such that I should never be able to live with her; that we should be bound to part. They both went back into the kitchen where Eliza was, and having finished my work, I took a seat at the foot of an oak in the yard. Soon after Betsey and her aunt Eliza came out to where I was, and Betsey said, "Mr. Anderson, what are you going to do with aunt Eliza?" I replied that I should try to live with her the balance of the year if I could, after which I should put her into a house off to herself, or I proposed to do so.—Eliza spoke up and said she could get her a place, and asked me if I would move her things. I answered her that I would. Betsey Pittman and Joe's wife, or whoever it was, then went off home, and Eliza went with them.

She remained away twelve or thirteen days, when she returned and sent for me down in the plantation. When I got to the house, I found her sitting down between the two houses, and when I spoke to her she snapped me up, and appeared to be very mad, but said she had got her a place.

I then went and got me a small

line about the size of a man's finger, and she looked rather frightened, but I told her not to be scared, for I did not mean to hurt a hair on her head. There was a pole resting in some forks in the yard, and over this I threw the rope telling her to come where I was, but she would not, and I went to her, and holding one end of the rope in my hands, the other I dropped on the ground, asking her as I did so to pick it up, which she did. Then I told her to pull, saying: "You know, Eliza, that if we put this rope over anything and pull upon it, after awhile, it will wear in two and drop us down. The end I have is the part you ought to have hold of and pull with me."

She then told me she was coming for her things in the morning, and I promised her I would carry them for her, and the next morning she came sure enough.

Before beginning to move, I said to her that I wanted her trunk key a moment, and she gave it to me.—I took it, and going with her to my chest, I put the trunk key into my lock, and unlocked it, the same as my own key, but it would not lock again. I said, you see that, don't you. She said she knew it was not her child, for she never let her have the key, which was not the truth, as I knew, and she was well aware that I knew it too, for ever since she had been at my house, the daughter had keys and everything else she wanted, and did as she

pleased with everything, and went when and where she pleased. For, although not more than nine years old when I married Eliza, the daughter had always been ahead of the mother and had to be mistress and master of the plantation when she said so, and whatever she said she must have, she had.

The morning I moved her to her brother's, Wesley Pittman, I sent some support for her, and thought I would continue to feed her, but a second thought took me, that I would be doing wrong to make my motherless children work for another and she doing neither they or myself any good, and after she found that I would do nothing more for her, she boasted that she would make me do it, and she actually believed she could compel me by law to support her. I wrote her that I should not give her any further supplies so long as she remained away from me; that when she had eaten what I had given her, she would have eaten the last provisions of mine she ever would, unless she came home to live.

In the letter of reply, she stated that she was entitled to a support from me, and she would make me support her. This made me so mad that I determined to go over to her brothers and whip her, and I got as far as my daughter's, Lucy Pittman, who married another brother of Eliza's. Lucy persuaded me not to go about her—to let her alone; and she knew quite as much about Eliza and her child as I did.

It seemed sinful to me then, to bear malice, and I felt that I never could come to strike a woman, so I made up my mind to go and see her brother, for I could take no rest of my life, under such a load of trouble. I got up to the door without being seen by anyone; and I thought they all appeared frightened when they saw me so suddenly at the door.—I spoke to Mrs. Pittman, and asked her to come out to me a moment, and not be afraid, for I did not come there to hurt anyone, but to talk quietly and peacefully with Eliza.

When I looked in at the door again, Eliza was gone. I asked the girls where she was, and they said they did not know—that she had just that minute stepped out. Going to the other door, I saw Eliza going down a lane, towards the woods. I called after her to come back; that I did not want to hurt a hair of her head, but I had come to talk with her. She turned 'round and came back, and as she walked up to the door, I called her by name, and told her never to turn her back on me again; that when she did, she turned her back on the best friend she ever had, except her poor old father. I told her if she was what she professed to be, and I what I had hope to believe I was, I knew we could live together, and I wanted her to go back home with me, and let us try to live the way we ought to live the few days we had on earth, in peace and happiness, as man and wife should.

She answered that if she went back, it would be the same case over again, for the devil had brought us together; and I said, on my part he did not. Then she went on to say that no woman in the world could suit me; that I was always going on about her wastefulness. Then I told her that if she would hear to me, I would go to the smoke house and barn myself, and then there would be no wastefulness, and no room for any dissatisfaction on that score. She then charged that I had ruined the character of her child.—I reasoned that I had not—that if ruined at all, it had been done before I had anything to do with her, for, as she knew, I daresn't speak to or correct her in anything from the day she came to my house; that if I reproached her, she would fly into a passion, and thus she had always upheld the child in everything, whether right or wrong.

I said to her you have not treated me with proper respect—not with the respect you have shown the negroes on the plantation; for you know I don't drink sweet milk, but I love butter milk just as well as anything I can get hold of, and I have not had any this whole year but twice, for instead of your churning the milk, you gave it to Betty, and it was carried down among the negroes, and what they could not drink was given to the hogs. She said she had no time to churn, was the reason she had never done any more of it. I said if you found you

had no time for such work, there were children enough on the place to do it; and you know I have often told you if you could not churn, to pour the milk in a trough for the dogs and thereby save bread.

I said to her then let bygones be bygones, and now I want you to go home and try to listen to me, and the things I tell you to go by, go by them, and let's both see if we can't both do better hereafter.

I then left for home, saying what day I would be there again, and I wanted her brother to be at home. I went at the appointed time, and going with her brother and his wife into the house where Eliza was I told her howd'ye, and asked her how she came on. I told them all I wanted to give them a history of my life, and what I had experienced, I hoped the Lord had done for my poor soul; and I said pray for me all of you; and if you see any wrong in what I have done, please let me know it. I then gave in my experience to them; and after getting through, I asked them for the Lord's sake, if you see any wrong in it, let me know it, and straighten me if I am wrong. Wesley and his wife both said they saw no wrong; and I said to Eliza, if you are what you profess to be, and I am what I profess to be, I know we can live together, because we are both one, just like Christ Jesus; and she agreed to go back home again; and it seemed to me that I loved her ten times better than I ever had loved

her in my life. My love for her was so great I could not help kissing her on the spot.

I sent for her, and she came back home, and I says to her, now, Eliza, I want you to take my advice and not go to flying into those pets, when I go to say anything to you or I speak to your child to correct her, for I don't do it out of any harm to the child, but for her own good, and your benefit, as well as mine.

She spoke and said she would not, and she knew she had done wrong, for she never suffered so much trouble before in her life as she had since she had left me. I told her she had not suffered a grain more than I, for I had been suffering a long time before she left me.

And I said, now, Eliza, I'll tell you what I wish you to do. I have got a cook hired here for you. Let her do your cooking, washing and scouring, and you have nothing to do but give out provisions and attend to things about the house, for cooking and washing is something you never done for yourself or the rest of the family, and I want you to take your sewing and come and sit with me under the oaks, where I can see you and talk with you; and she said she would. I said to her, I hoped and trusted in the Almighty God that it would never be the case again that she would turn her back on me, for to me it always seemed the most sinful thing in the world for a man and his wife to come to-

gether and then have to part, because they are then not only apart in this world but in the world to come, for in the world to come, where God and Christ is, they cannot meet to dwell together. She said to me it should never be the case again; and she took her chair and went and sat under the oaks with me every chance she could get. And poor old aunt Polly Pittman, she would come down there and sit with us and talk with us and hear us talk, and she seemed to be just as glad of our being together again, and as happy with us as she could be, for it seemed to me she loved to hear us talk. I believe the poor old woman was a christian woman, and is, I hope, this day in Heaven at rest. Just before she died, she desired to hear preaching, and Jordan Johnson, he came to my house and preached, and that day she gave in her experience to him and some other members of the church who were present.

Just before that time Eliza had got into one of her tantrums, and the old lady must have died very much dissatisfied about it, from the conversation she had with me, for she had heard the promises Eliza made me, some of which I will repeat.

I told her that I would give her the same chance that I had given my two poor wives before her; that she might have all the butter she made; all the chickens she raised, and all the tallow that came out of the cattle we killed, except so much

of each as was necessary for our own family purposes. At the same time I observed to her that, being a woman, I supposed she had feeling enough to give a portion of these things to my poor little children, and she remarked that she would do so, but that my grand-daughter being older than they, *she* must be given thus and so. But she couldn't think for a moment that I had any faith in her statement, for she was perfectly aware that I knew my grand-daughter would never get it, for she had already given everything to her own daughter. However, I told her that it was my desire to divide these things among all the children equally, and not that one should have all and the remainder get none; and she faithfully promised me that my wishes should be carried out—that she was really willing to do so, and that her own views upon the point fully accorded with my own.

But the sequel proved that she falsified every promise she ever made me, and for cause that will explain itself to the reader, I will now refer to her conduct immediately after our marriage. Soon after that event we commenced attending church together. I went with her four times, but she behaved so outrageously on these occasions that it was no pleasure to me to accompany her. It was no satisfaction to leave home quarreling and return in the same manner—I couldn't bear it—so after awhile I quit going to

church with her. Some time after this, I asked her which she had rather do, "Take a cart and go to meetin', or ride horseback?" She snapped me up and replied, that she'd rather ride horseback; so she went in that manner twice, and then took to going afoot with her daughter. On Friday nights she would wash, arrange her clothes, &c., and on the following mornings, before I could feed my stock and get back to the house, she would be off and gone.

Sometimes she would go off tearing mad just after twelve o'clock on Friday, and at these times she would really appear as if she was crazy. Generally at such times no one would say a word to her, but on one occasion the cook asked her what in the world she went off mad in that way for, and came back home so angry, and she replied to the cook, that she belonged to the church, and was obliged to do it.

One Sunday, she and Betsey Pittman went to church together (they went in the cart, I suppose, for they came back that way,) and in the evening after they returned, I asked Betsey Pittman who preached that day, and she told me, and then went on to tell me that folks had been talking of me that day. I enquired what they had been talking about me for, and she said it was because I gave Eliza no better chance than I did to go to church. I said, they may talk on, I didn't care, for Eliza had as good

a chance to go to meeting as she did before I married her.

I had heard before that the people generally, as well as her own relations, were talking this thing, wherefore it does seem to me that anyone not altogether blinded can see through the whole business.

And now to the great fortune she made by marrying me: After Lee's surrender, I was ordered to go forward and take the oath of allegiance, (I called it that day the *insolvent* oath, and a great many found it such,) and I did so on account of the colored people. After I had taken the oath, I went home and into the house where Eliza was and told her that our negroes were free, and that we had agreed upon the price I should pay them for their labor. I told her that I should like for mine to stay with me as I had my crop planted, but if they wanted to leave they could do so, as I could make enough to eat without them. She then began to rave and rant, and declared that when the negroes, and especially Betty, the cook, left, she would leave too. At this point I went down to the field where the negroes were, and told them they were all free, but that if they would remain with me, I would give them so much (naming the different sums) and they agreed to stay; and all did stay but one. I then went back to the house and hired the cook for Eliza. On the next day one of my white boys did something that he

ought not to have done, and I began to chastise him for it, when Eliza walked up with her hands on her hips, and remarked that losing my property would drive me distracted, and that I had only brought her to my house to make her a negro for myself and my children.

I replied that I hoped it would not drive her distracted before it did me; that as for myself, my property was all paid for—paid for by my honest industry, and not acquired by cheating, stealing, robbing or marriage. She then went on to say that before she would remain at my house and cook, and wash and such, she would go to the poor house and stay there, and die.

It was not long after I married her before she began to lament her fortune, and to express fears that her daughter would lose all of her things that she brought with her, but I told her to put her daughter's things away—that I did not want them.

All of Eliza's worldly goods, except a "bofat," I carried home in two carts, and could easily have carried the "bofat," but Eliza said there wasn't room for it in the house.—She talked and fretted so much about the loss of her property, that I went to Tarboro, saw John Norfleet, and got him to write me a will, in which I gave her 50 acres of land, with a house upon it (the same in which I now live), and the effects she had when I married her, and one year's provisions. When

She returned home from Wesley Pittman's, her brother, I told her what I had done, and she seemed entirely satisfied, and certainly ought to have been, for the rent of the land itself, would have been a plenty of support for herself and daughter—more than they had ever had before in their lives.

When I married Eliza, her child was a county charge, and its mother was receiving two dollars from the county for its support. Of course I meant to help her maintain her child, and our neighbors all around were contributing to its support, although at that very time her child was large enough to earn a livelihood for itself.

When Eliza came back from her brother's and made me such fair promises, I began to go to meetin' with her again, and went alone with her four times. I never in all my life had so much confidence in Eliza as I did at this time, and it was all owing to the many fair promises she made me. I loved her greatly and felt like I could eat her up from affection, if I knew it wouldn't hurt her. For the four months following I had all the pleasure I ever saw with her. In this time we went to hear Jordan Johnson preach once, and I never heard a sermon in my life before that did me so much good. It lifted up my faith and hope so much that I felt like I had been changed from nature to grace, and told Eliza so. . . While I was telling her of it, Jor-

dan Johnson rode up, and coming to my right, I told him he had done me more good that day, than ever before in his life, and he said he was glad of it, and I told him I would go to see him before many days. That was on Saturday. The following morning I arose from bed, dressed, went out and fed my stock, returned and ate my breakfast. I intended to go to preaching that day, and seeing no preparations that way on Eliza's part, I asked her if she wasn't going to meetin'. She replied that she felt so sore and bad that she couldn't go. I said, "Oh, do go with me, Eliza; after starting, you will feel better, I hope; now you'd better come and go."—She replied that as long as I wanted her to go she would. So we both went to meetin' together.

On Monday morning she arose, went into the kitchen and began to fuss and rail. She said before she would stay in such a mess as was there (at my house) she would go into the woods, and remain there till she died, because I had only brought her there to make a waiting-girl of her.

This language filled my heart so full that I thought it would break. Breakfast was now ready and I went in to eat. As I sat down to the table she was leaning over the fire place, with her back to me. I drank a cup of tea, but ate not a mouthful. I then went out of the house, and her tongue streightway began again. I now got a chair

and went off in the yard about sixty feet from the kitchen and sat down. While sitting there, I said, "Lord, is it possible that Eliza has begun her old sinful ways again. O, Lord, stand by me, and be with me, and help me to stand the hard trials and persecutions in this unfriendly world." Soon I went off to the plantation, and remained there, I suppose, about two hours, when becoming very weak and weary I returned to the house, took my chair and again sat down near where I sat two hours before. [She was still ranting.] Eliza had a rooster that she called "Pete," and the very moment I sat down, that rooster came to me, stared me in the face and crowed. I shoo-ed at him—he ran off a little way, and for awhile I thought nothing of it. But soon he came back, stared at me again, and began to walk around me, and crowing all the time.—While Pete was crow-crowing, Eliza was raging and ranting.

One day in the kitchen she began her railing, and said before she would stay there, and cook and do, and do and cook for such a parcel of hound-dogs as we, she would go in the woods and live under a pine-bark shelter, for if she stayed there she knew she would die and go to hell. A few days after this as she was passing by me, I said to her, "Eliza, the way you are going on on this plantation surely will kill me, for my poor heart must break from trouble." She made no re-

ply, but simply turned her back on me, saying "pish, pish."

In January I went to Whitaker's turnout, leaving her at home in her tantrums, and being greatly distressed in my mind, at the moment of starting I took a pretty good drink, and arriving at Whitaker's I took a little more. I drank too much, I confess, but going back home that evening I pestered no one, but after sitting up awhile, went to bed. I had no sooner struck the bed than Eliza said that her *first* husband was a smart man, and so, too, was her father, and that she wouldn't stay there any longer. I told her to go then; and she threw open the door and darted out. It made me so angry that I arose from the bed, put on my clothes, and put out after her. On the way to aunt Polly Pittman's, where I found her, I got me a cotton stalk, with which I struck Eliza twice when I came up with her. As soon as I struck my wife she broke away, and I then told her to go home, but instead of obeying my orders, what does she do but goes to Betsey Pittman's.—Now the folks over there had been threatening pretty heavily what they were going to do if I didn't mind, so there was a piece of iron that we had for a fire-stick at our house, so I just took that along with me as I went out to seek Eliza over at Betsey Pittman's, with the determination that if anybody else interfered in this (strictly family) matter between me and my wife, I

would wear 'em out to a frazzle. I didn't find her there, however, but if I had, would have punished her severely. She remained away several days, and I advertised her.—The day after the advertisement appeared she returned home. While she was absent, some mysterious power seemed to say to me that it was my duty to hold devotional exercises in the presence and hearing of my family every night, and upon Eliza's return home, the same power told me that I should not only do her no harm, but should pray for her instead. I followed the advice of the mysterious power.

One night as I sat before the fire, she came in and sat down facing me, and said to me that I was always going down on my knees to pray, but as for herself, she never before heard anybody pray for anyone except the ELECT. I did not reply to her, and she jumped up and ran out of the house. After this I did not practice my devotions in her presence.

My wife would go out barefooted and barelegged (her frock tucked away up above her knees) to milk the cows, a quarter of a mile from the house, and the neighbors seeing her in this unseemly condition, would enquire why in the world she went without shoes, and she would reply that she had no shoes—that I neither would give her any shoes nor go to preaching with her. All of which was just as arrant a l—fib as ever was told. After she mar-

ried me, she never saw the time when she didn't have shoes to put on—shoes good enough to keep her feet from the ground; and what in the world she meant by leaving them off so much, I couldn't for my life tell. Sometimes when I would tell Eliza she ought to put her shoes on, she would reply that she would when cold weather came, and maybe at that very time the weather was as cold as it ever gets to be.

I hired my daughter, Susan Denton, to weave two webs of cloth that my little motherless children had spun (I think she told me there were forty-eight yards in the two pieces), and after she had finished it Eliza cut off eleven yards. Where the balance went, the reader can guess (?) after awhile. Eliza's daughter then takes the cotton that old aunt Polly Pittman and my little motherless children had spun, and weaves her a web of cloth of eleven yards. Next she takes ever so much butter—I can't begin to say how much; over fifty pounds of tallow, and my children's cloth, and goes with them—the two lots of cloth, butter, tallow and all—to Mr. Robert Austin's, to trade.—But she pretended that she couldn't get there, for my little girls' cloth, such things as she wanted, and she put off for some other store. She came back soon, however, and I asked her if she had done her business, and she said she had. I enquired how much she received for

my little girls' cloth, and she said she got thirty cents a yard. Very well.

I had, sometime before this, discovered that my children and I were getting very bare as to shirts, and I told them that if they would spin the cotton, I would buy a bunch of warp, and we could all have shirts.

This day I bought a bunch of cotton, and Eliza bought one, too. When we returned home, the finery Eliza's daughter had purchased had to be shown all around, of course. Among the articles were two yards of calico at fifteen cents a yard, two Shaker bonnets at forty cents each, and two belts at ten cents each—and these were the goods, wares and merchandise, all told, that she gave my little girls in exchange for their eleven yards of cloth; keeping the entire proceeds of the other cloth, butter, tallow, &c., for herself and her daughter.

The bunch of cotton she bought that day she sent away, and where her's went there went mine, and I have not seen or heard of it to this day. Two or three days from that time, I asked Eliza if she supposed that I was such a fool that I couldn't see through her doings. I told her that she had been robbing my poor little children, and that she had never been the woman to give them even the wrappings of her finger in all her life. Lady of the plantation, and both master and mistress of the premises, as she was, she bought for *herself* a fine worsted dress, a very

fine hoop skirt (the one she had was not big enough—it wouldn't spread out enough for her), a pair of fine shoes, and other gay riggin' to match her dress.

Off the balance of the web of cloth remaining, she would *slip* a piece at a time, until she made way with all of it, except enough for three pairs of pants, and lining for a coat and waistcoat. One piece of it she took, she said, to make her daughter a jacket, but afterwards thought to make it for herself, but I don't believe she did it, for I never saw her have it on.

A great (?) legacy fell to Eliza from her grandmother Pittman's estate, of which her brother Wesley was administrator. When Wesley paid over to Eliza her full share of the estate, he gave her the full sum of two dollars. Well, when the great legacy was received, Eliza and her'n had to go to the store to spend it. Among the things she bought was a fine dress and a right smart of other riggin', and all of it with those two dollars. [Of course she had been robbing Peter to pay Paul—and you may guess who *Peter* was.]

The legacy having all gone, they took up another plan of operations. My little girls were spinning cotton for our shirts, as I have mentioned before, and just as fast as they could spin it, Eliza and her daughter would slip it off and make way with it. In the meantime, my children and I were getting almost naked,

so much so that Eliza had to turn in to mending our ragged garments. While so employed, she was everlastingly complaining that she had to be mending and patching old dirty rags all the time. Yes, she said, it's patch and do, and do and patch; cook and do, and do and cook; patch and cook, cook and patch; patch, cook—cook, patch—patch—patch; and, she added, I am not agoing to do it any longer, for he just brought me here anyhow to make a nigger of me.

While my wife was thus fuming, her *lady* daughter would strut around the house saying, "Me and mother are agoing away after this year; after this here year, me and mother are agoing away; and I don't know what in the world you will all do then—that I don't."

We will now enter upon the chicken question for the purpose of showing up her daughter's character in that line. Liza and her girl had their chicken coops three or four steps from my meal house, and her girl she would mix up water and meal and throw in the coops—and keep throwing in—until the whole yard would be just as sour.—And sometimes when the dough in the chicken coop would be fully an inch thick, she would go into the house and tell her mother that she must go and feed the chickens for she knew they were hungry. And Liza would always tell her daughter to go and feed the chickens. I stood this thing as long as I could,

so one day, in a very friendly sort of way, I told Liza there wasn't any use in throwing things away in that sort of a style. I told her just to go and look in the coop and see how much meal was wasting.—I told her we couldn't get along and live, and things going on so. She replied very snappishly that there was nothing in the coops but meal bran, and that I couldn't expect little chickens to eat meal bran, for they couldn't stand it. I couldn't stand this wasting of meal in such a fashion, and I resolved that I wouldn't.

But to the chicken question again. When Liza first came to my house, she brought with her three hens, one of which they called the "Old Blue Hen." [Now I candidly believe that I had *two* blue hens when Liza first came to my house.] Well, her daughter could set the old blue hen whenever she pleased—provided she could get eggs to put under her. When the old blue was sitting, the daughter would not let her come off her nest to be fed, but she would pile up the feed around her—as much bread, &c., as a man could eat. When she would hatch, and come off her nest with her little chicks, her brood would begin to increase in numbers every day, and it happened in this way. When any other hen on the place would hatch, this daughter would inform her mother of the fact, and declare that this other hen was killing her chickens, and that they ought to be taken away from

her and put with "old blue's" chicks, and—it was done. And that's the way Liza and her lady daughter got all the chickens.

In the spring of '67, I asked my wife not to try to raise many chickens, for corn was so high and scarce that the fowl business wouldn't pay. I was then paying seven and a half and eight dollars a barrel for all the corn consumed in my family, and of course I wanted to live as savingly as possible. But she continued to let the hens set and hatch chickens, but not only that she trained them to go into the meal-house, where they would scratch and wallow in the meal until it was not really fit to be eaten. Besides the meal-house got to smelling so badly that it could be scented over the whole yard; indeed it smelled as badly as carrion, from bad eggs and such.—But enough on this point until we reach "Pete" again. I was so much upset in mind about these things that I went to Cotton's meeting house on the following Sunday to see William Bell, and get him to talk to Liza. I told him I wished him to come to my house on Friday before the third Sunday in April, but did not let him know what I wanted with him. He promised to come, and did so, but found my wife so sick that he did not stay with me that night; and I did not see him again until after Liza left me. I saw him next at brother John's, where I spoke to him about her leaving me, and about her conduct

generally, and told him that it was on account of these matters that I had desired to see him when I invited him to my house. I wanted him to remonstrate with her upon her behaviour, and thought that a round lecture from him might do her good.

The Friday before the third Sunday in April, my daughter had sent me a mess of fresh fish, and on Saturday morning, while my two little girls were in the kitchen helping to get breakfast, I saw Liza's lady daughter in the house, and I told her to go in the kitchen and assist the girls in preparing breakfast, so that they could get through quickly and go to their work. I was sitting on one side of the door at the time, and jumping up she passed by me, remarking as she passed that she wasn't going to run her legs off for anybody. I quietly retorted that there wasn't the least danger of her losing her lower limbs in that way. But she went on to the kitchen, and placing some of the fish in the frying pan she put the pan on the fire, and there let it remain until the fish were completely burned up, and she then threw them away. I told her to put away two of the fish until her mother was well enough to eat them.

Divers times Eliza would set her lady daughter to mind what was cooking, but instead of attending to her business she would take her seat, and sit still until everything was burned up, and then whatever it was, Eliza would carry it off to the

garden, throw it away, and then get more. I frequently talked to them about such wastefulness, but they always replied that they didn't care—they didn't have to provide for our common wants. I never said more to them, because I knew if I did that it would only make matters worse.

The following Sunday morning—the morning after the fish were burnt up—Eliza filled the dinner-pot with water, placed it on the fire, and then went out to milk the cows. When she returned to the house, her daughter met her at the door and informed her that some one had been taking her water from the pot. My wife grew wrathful then, and said sure enough somebody had taken her water. She further said that I had just carried her there to make a waiting-girl of her. I said nothing to this, but told her girl that she ought to have gone after water for her poor old mother, instead of permitting her poor old mother to do so. I told her that she had not only not done as she ought to have done, but that she was forever trying to make a disturbance on the plantation.

I further remarked to her that I was firmly resolved to put a stop to such conduct. Hereupon Liza began to storm and said to her daughter that she had better go right off and find another home for herself; that she knew she could do it, and she wanted her to do it, for said Liza, I should never die satisfied

and leave you here. Upon this her daughter went off, remained away about four days, and then came back. The morning after her return she came walking up to the kitchen where her mother was, and I asked her (I was sitting in the door of my dwelling) if she had come back to run her legs off. She made no reply. I then remarked to her that it had been reported by her mother, and her relatives generally, that I had not treated her as a member of the family. Such was the fact I said, but shall not be so in future, and now, says I, if you don't go to work and behave yourself, I will give you one of the d——1st whippings that ever a girl wore. Her mother then began to rail terribly, but I said nothing to her—not a single word.

But I told Mary Williford, her lady daughter, that if her mother was to die that she had not a single relative with whom she could find a home, for they all knew her too well. That day, after our talk, she took to work, and spun about four ounces of cotton. She commenced spinning again the next morning, but left off at twelve o'clock, and went over to my son John's, who married her cousin, and there she remained, I think, until the following morning, when she came back. She brought with her a web of cloth of fourteen yards, which she was to weave for her cousin, and she did weave it in just fourteen days—I know for I took note of the

time. When she finished the web of cloth, Eliza took down the loom, and removed it to a small house about an hundred yards distant from my dwelling. Upon getting into their new quarters, they got in fine humor, and began to talk about the lads and young men, and must have been greatly pleased with their own remarks, for I could hear them laugh clear to my house. But as soon as ever she went to the kitchen her aggravating tongue would begin. Once she said that I was watching her lest she might steal something, I replied that I was not watching her particularly, at the same time reminded her that no honest woman would use such language to her husband, and that I had seen enough of her to know that the charge of honesty was the very last one to which she was liable. I will now endeavor to show up another trait in her character: Before the provisos were placed on the table at meal times, she would cut up all the meat, pick out all the choice bits for herself and daughter, and send the refuse to the table for me and my little children. From the time that I talked with Jordan Johnson until she went away *for good*, I never saw a whole piece of meat on my table, and during that time she never spoke one friendly word to me.

Liza staid with me about four years and four months, and in that whole time she never got a rag of bed clothes, if you except one little

sheet she got for her own bed by weaving. She would never put a mouthful of butter on the table until it was so rank that you could scent it the moment you entered the house.

About twelve months before she went away, she began to give me an allowance of butter. She would place a lump about the size of a hen's egg by my plate. This rather vexed me, and I asked her what in the name of common sense went with all the butter, and she replied that it all went to pay for washing the old dirty rags. But that wasn't so, for after she went away the same colored woman who had been washing for us all the time, and who used to belong to me, told me that Eliza had never given her a thing in the world for washing, except one old frock.

Liza was forever annoying me by talking about our nakedness, and I generally retorted that it was very true that we were inclined that way, but she must remember that *she* had never put anything on us.—The clothes that my little girls wore were made of cotton that they themselves had carded and spun,—no thanks to Liza. As for her own lady daughter, Mary Williford, she never did a thing in the blessed world but stuff her insides, lie abed, lounge around and make fusses.

One day I went to Whitaker's turn-out, and coming back, I called at Wesley Fountain's (whose own aunt Eliza was, and her first hus-

band was Wesley's cousin), to see how he was &c., and while there he told me that he would have to buy meat for the next year, and that he would have to buy it on time, as he didn't have the cash to pay down for it. He said he thought it would be better to buy bacon as it was cheaper than pork, and asked what I thought of it. I gave it as my opinion that if he could get old meat that was free of worms, he had better do so, because it was the cheapest. He didn't ask whether I had any to sell, although I had let him have seventy-five pounds the same year, so I went home. But knowing that he had no one to help him, I felt for his condition, and sent him word by his sister Martha that I would let him have all I could spare. So the next day Martha and his sister came with a cart, and said that Wesley wanted me to send him all the meat I could spare, and to let him know my price for it. [I had already told him the price.] The next morning, which was the last day of November, they drove the cart up to my smoke-house door, and took on two hundred and fifty-four pounds of bacon. I then made a calculation in my head, what the meat would come to, and told Martha to tell her brother to make me a note for the amount as quick as ever he could, and send it to me. In a few days Patrick Lawrence came to my house, and I got him to make a calculation about the bacon, and to enter the account in a book, in order

that there might be no mistake about it.

On the first day of January, Henry Fountain came to my house and paid me for some meat that he had bought of me, and paid me some money also from his brother Wesley for the seventy-five pounds that he had got some time before. I requested Henry to say to Wesley that I wanted him to fix up that note and send it to me. About the middle of January, Redding Pittman came over to my house, and as he walked up to the fire-place (I was sitting on one side of the room and Liza on the other), he said:—"Here, uncle Cajah, is the note that Wesley has sent you." I suppose he had the note in his hand, as I never saw him take it from his pocket; at any rate, I did not take it but told him to read over to me, and he did so. The note was for one hundred and fifty-four pounds of meat, only, and I told him I would not receive it, because it was not right. Then Liza, with her wicked, deceitful, untruthful tongue, spoke up and said, "Lord, how I hate that." From the manner in which she spoke, one who didn't know her, would have thought that butter wouldn't have melted in her mouth at the time. And she went on to say that it would kill poor Wesley, as bad-off as he was. I said I didn't know why it should kill him, as it was merely a mistake on his part, or that Martha might have made a mistake, and told him I sent him one

hundred and fifty-four pounds, when it ought to have been *two* hundred and fifty-four pounds; or that she might not have been present when the note was drawn. Liza replied that Martha was not at all forgetful, but that I was mighty forgetful. I told her that I was not altogether so forgetful as she might suppose; that I knew my business, and knew, too, that there were two hundred and fifty-four pounds of the bacon. Here the bacon question was dropped, and nothing more was said about it for a month. But one Monday evening Martha came over to my house and brought it up again in this way: When she first came over she went to the kitchen, where Liza and her lady daughter were, and remaining in there awhile, all three came in the house where I was. After the usual salutation, she says to me, "Uncle Cajah, aren't you mistaken about that matter (of the meat)?" I told her I was not; that I remembered all about it, just as well as if it had transpired only yesterday. She declared that I was, but did not think that I intended to do wrong. I then asked Martha if she weighed the meat when she reached home with it, and she said she did, but had forgotten how many pounds there were. I then remarked to her that I wished to be correct about it, but, under the circumstances, couldn't see how I would be likely to realize my wish. Here she jumped up and ran out to the kitchen where Liza

and her lady daughter were, and I did not see her any more. Thus the matter of the meat rested for about a month, or six weeks. One day I had to look up some old papers, and I had engaged Rias Dickson and my son Tom to assist me in finding them. They had examined all my papers, except some that were in a band-box, which had been placed over the foot of the bed on which Martha lay the night she staid with us, and taking that down they began to examine it, and the first thing they found was a note. Rias Dickson was the first to discover it, and as he did so he exclaimed, "Here is a note against Wesley Fountain." "A note against Wesley Fountain?" said I. Yes, he said it was against Wesley Fountain. I then requested him to read it over to me. He read it, and I saw at once that it was the same old note that had been presented to me for the one hundred and fifty-four pounds of bacon. And I remarked that I would not submit to such injustice and rascality; that I would have justice or die in the attempt to get it. I then took the note and tore it up. Rias and my son Tom soon left for their homes, when I went over to Redding Pittman's to enquire of him how that note had been carried to Wesley Fountain's. He told me that he gave it to Henry Fountain. I then informed him how the note had been found in my possession, and gave it as my opinion that anybody who

could be guilty of such a "trick" was capable of anything dishonest and villainous. I then started for home. When I arrived there Liza's lying, deceitful tongue was wagging away as usual, and coming out towards me with her hands on her hips, she squalled out and wanted to know why I had not gone to her about the note. I couldn't see why I ought to have gone to her about the matter, and so expressed myself. She then said that Martha had given her the note, telling her to give it to me, and that she had put it in my band-box, and then forgotten to inform me. I asked her if she wasn't ashamed to tell me such a falsehood. I then told her that the manner in which she had endeavored to put the note on me was worse than stealing. I observed that if I could not get what belonged to me I would accept nothing; but that it was the last time Wesley Fountain would get anything from me. I now determined to let the whole thing drop—say nothing about it—in the hope that Liza would do better, but instead of improving she went "beyant" herself. She went around among her folks telling them that I was slandering her, and she charged her own mean acts upon me. When she left me the last time, I resolved to keep her sinful acts from the world no longer. As soon as she left me, I warranted Wesley for that meat, and at the trial she appeared as witness against me. The case came up for trial at Tarboro, before

squire James H. M. Jackson, colored. After being sworn, I began to tell something about the matter, but had not proceeded far, when Liza disputed my word. I had not known before that she was present, but recognizing her well-known voice, I said, "Liza, is this you; is it possible this is you?" She opened her mouth not at all, so I began to talk to her, and asked her several questions pertinent to the case on trial. She denied everything—things that I knew to be facts—and losing all patience with the wicked woman, I called her, to her face, a dirty, lying strumpet.

She said she could prove her character, and was going to do it. I said I thought she had already proved it. After the trial she went to Squire Jackson and desired to make oath as to the weight of the bacon, but the "Squire" would not permit her to do so. The case was finally continued to Fountain's house. When the trial came off at Fountain's, she was not present.—She knew that I was pretty wrathful on account of her course before Squire Jackson, and thought it best to leave before I arrived upon the ground. And I reckon she acted wisely in keeping out of my sight, for her course about the meat had made me so mad that I don't know that I would not have beaten her some. The fact was, she didn't know any more about that meat than one of my dogs, for when the meat was weighed at the smoke-

house, she was in the kitchen, which was twenty or twenty-five yards distant.

Some time after this she had me bound over to keep the peace, and her reason for doing so was, so *she* said, that she was afraid I would kill her; that she had heard I said if ever I caught her by herself I would beat her almost to death; all of which was false, of course, because if I had ever desired to take the life of the poor creature, I could very easily have done so on divers occasions, (and once when I drenched her for some ailment,) for I kept strychnine in my house for eighteen years.

When I laid my hand on Liza at the church, I did so with the resolution of taking her home and giving her a genteel whipping at first, then locking her up every night and take her out by day, and never once permitting her to go out of my sight until she got perfectly cool and learned how to behave herself.

I killed three hogs that weighed one thousand and seventy-five pounds, and put all of them in pickle except one shoulder and the hams. I put them up in a hogshead and barrel; the barrel was about the size of a brandy barrel. One day I went in the barrel to weigh out rations for my colored laborers, and discovered that two pieces had been removed from the top. Liza told me that they had been taken for the use of the white family, and I suppose they had.—Another time I went into the hogs-

head to get out rations for my laborers, and weighed out seventy-five pounds. The next ration time I weighed out seventy-five pounds, which makes in all one hundred and fifty pounds that I had taken out. When I wanted some of it the third time, I sent a boy to get it, and he was so long about it that I asked why he didn't get it and bring it along, that I was tired of waiting. He observed that there were only two pieces in the hogshead. I told him there was bound to be more meat than that in there, and that he would find it under the brine.—Still he was unable to find any, so I examined the hogshead myself. To my utter surprise I found no meat, whereupon I exclaimed, "Lord have mercy upon me, who ever knew the likes of this; it surely must have gone out of the door, for I have not heard of the smoke-house having been broken open." Hearing this exclamation of surprise, Liza walked out, put her hands on her hips and screamed out, "I reckon I *stole* it." Anyhow, says I, it is not here. She then said it had been eaten. "Not here," says I; and it would have taken some time to have eaten it anywhere else. At that time I thought maybe some of the negroes had taken the key, entered the smoke-house, and carred off the meat, and did not suspect Liza of making way with it. But the mystery of the thing caused me to watch, and I soon discovered that Liza had two keys to the milk house. The

way I found it out was that when she would be passing about, without having the right key, she would run her hand in her pocket and get another one out, with which she would unlock the door and go in. I could hardly think there was anything wrong, though it all seemed a little strange to me.

In a short time she went away one Saturday on a visit. Usually when she went off she left out enough provisions to last until her return, and on this particular evening, between sunset and dark, I went to see about it. I went to the place where the keys always hung, when she did not have them in her pocket, but they were not there. I enquired of my children about the smoke-house key, but they knew nothing about it, unless it was hanging up in the house, but finding it was nowhere in the house, she said that her mother sometimes put the smoke-house key in the milk house. I took a key and went and unlocked the milk-house, and there I found over behind a bowl of milk the smoke-house key, and it struck me right off where my meat went to. I got so mad I determined to let the key stay, and watch the door, and if anyone came to go in, I would kill them, and I went and took a seat to watch and study about it. After about an hour it came to me that I should be doing wrong, for Liza was the cause of it all. So I went and took the keys and carried them all in the house, thinking that when she found them moved, she would

know that I had my suspicions, and that it would alter her.

When she came home Sunday afternoon, I got near the milk-house, and after changing her clothes, she went to the milk-house door, and taking the little extra key out of her pocket, she opened the door, but not finding the smoke-house key, she turned and passed me, and as she did, I looked her straight in the face, and she turned as pale as a corpse. She went in the house, took the key, and went and got meat for supper, all the while as pale as she could be; but she said not a word to me, or I to her about it, and I don't know how long it had been since she had spoke a pleasant word to me.

I said nothing about the matter, but I never missed the keys from the usual place any more, nor my meat never went away so fast after that. The winter before the time I am speaking about, I killed and put up fourteen thousand pounds of as fine pork as ever was raised in the county, and had several beeves in the fall. I never sold but little over twenty-five hundred pounds, and though I had only twenty-seven in family, I had but a few pieces in my smoke-house at the end of the year.

I want anyone who has been in the habit of feeding families, to make a calculation of how much meat it required for mine of twenty-seven souls; seven thousand pounds of bacon with the beeves ought to have done me, leaving seven thousand

to sell, and bacon that year was worth twenty cents. just a little grain, and so she went on until dinner was over.

One Sunday afternoon in July, to get out of a fuss, I went off to my son Thomas Anderson's. When I got home it was getting darkish, and seeing some one sitting in the yard, I asked my son, who came to take my horse, who it was, and he told me Robert Hart. It seemed that when I heard that, a great burden was lifted off from my heart, and I hoped to the Lord that his coming would cause Liza to do better than she had been doing for a long time.

When we went in to eat supper, I found her barefooted and barelegged, with her dress tucked up to her knees, and that hurt my feelings, for she had shoes and stockings, and she ought to have had them on.

That night old aunt Polly Pittman made out to get down to our house; and Robert Hart sang and prayed for us that night.

In the morning, Liza arose and went about getting breakfast, without a sign of anything on her feet, and her coat tucked up as high as she dared to raise it. She killed some chickens after breakfast, and had them at the well cleaning them, and in stooping about, you could see just as high up her clothes as you had a mind to, and there was Robert Hart, the preacher. It hurt my feelings. I was ashamed for her, and I passed by where she was, and said, Liza, do pray let your coat down a little lower. She said not a word, but did drop her dress

After eating dinner, Robert and I went out and took some chairs under the trees in the yard, and after getting her table cleared away, Liza she came out to where we were, with old Satan in her, and says: "I'll come and set down with you all awhile now, if I am allowed to do it." Robert Hart observed to her she could, if she would behave herself, with her silver slippers on. She sat down a little while, when up she jumps and off she goes.

Mr. Hart then, pretty soon, went off to John W. Johnson's. He had not more than got out of sight before she began her fuss again.

In the course of the week, she got so high that she moved off again, going to her brother Wesley's.—While she was there, I sent her two letters, stating in them as we could not live together, I wanted to be divorced, but she said she would do no such thing, unless I would build a nice house, give her fifty acres of land, four barrels of corn, four hundred pounds of bacon, a barrel of flour, and a large amount of sugar and coffee; a great quantity, I thought, for one person to use, as I stated in one of my letters to her.

She was always complaining that I never gave her anything, and made this an excuse for the way in which she neglected and mistreated my daughters, but it was no excuse for allowing her child to go on all sorts of nasty talk before them, as

she did, whenever she got a chance. Nor did I think there was any use in my getting her anything, considering the things she had from the plantation to buy with—butter, tallow, eggs, cloth, &c.

And I did not dress myself fine enough for her, and she came right out flat and said she had married two husbands, but both together did not have pride enough to make one decent man. I thought she knew me well enough before she married me to tell how much pride I had.

As she was always a flinging it in my teeth that I got her nothing, I said to her one day, as I was going to Tarboro, that I meant to get her a dress, and I wanted to know what she thought of a worsted one? And I got her as fine a dress as any lady need to wear, trimmings, and a shawl, for all of which I paid thirty-five dollars and some cents. I thought I would try her with these presents, and hoped that some good would come of them, but it did no good. I had not given her anything yet.

In awhile after I got the fine dress, she said she wanted to get me a suit of yarn clothes, but had no wool. I said I had no money then, but should have in a few days, and I would get her some wool. In a few nights, however, she had some wool, and was engaged in picking it to pieces to card. She said she got it from Lawrence Lyons, and paid for it with cloth that had been got to make me two pair of breeches.

At that time she carried off cloth, rags, and eggs enough to get her a dress and one for her daughter.—The wool she put in my clothes, she carded and spun at nights, and she made warp of the bunch of cotton I got for my two little girls. After getting these clothes, she took the greatest pride in hitting me in the teeth about it, saying that when she came there, I was naked; and she kept on in this way until I swore I never would put them on my back again, and as she was going away, I told her to carry them with her. She said she would not, and if I put them on the cart, she would throw them out. I declared they should not stay in my house, and she said give them to John. I said they were not mine, and I told my little girl to tell John to take them but he said he did not want them—that I had better wear them myself; but I said I'd be d——d if I did, and if he did not take them away I should bury them in the branch, the woods, or in the ditch, for they should not stay about me; and he took them and carried them off. Before I would have put them clothes on any more, I would have wrapped myself in a sheet and gone to Tarboro, and bought clothes, after I had been made to swear about them as I had. She left me but one pair of breeches, and they were so tight that I called them skin-flints, and but one whole shirt to my back, and that she got just before she left. That was one thread in the reed, and coarse enough for a meal-bag. And there

was enough of the cloth when it was wove for another shirt for me and one apiece for my boys, for they did not have a shirt that you could have told what they were made of but one piece, and that was tacked on, not sewed—nor a whole pair of breeches to their names.

When she was about to leave she put out the fine dress I had bought for her, and threw it on the bed, and told Ann to take it, for she would never wear it again. I told her Ann should not have it, for when I gave anything to abody, I gave it to them, and they were welcome to it, and I was not always talking about it; she had to carry it away from there, and I took it and threw it in her trunk. She never said anything about the nine dollar shawl—as big as a bed-spread nearly—that I bought at the same time, and I said I thought she kept that back to wrap herself and rich loafers in when she went out nights “bushwhacking” of it. But she sold her dress and bought her another, so I was told, with what she got for the one I gave her; and had she got for it what I gave, it would have got a dress for her daughter and one for herself.

She was a great housekeeper; when she moved the loom out of the kitchen, she stood the table in the middle of the room, and left everything on it from one day's end to another, and the cats got on the table every night, and tore the table-cloth, and gnawed, and scratch-

ed, and eat, and mousled the victuals, until nothing was fit to eat, as my grandson declared when he found a piece of meat on the table that he had seen one of the cats dragging round a good part of the morning. We had five cats, and Liza said she they were tearing up all the table-cloths, and she wished they would.

I told her I did not know how she could expect anything else, for the cats were not to blame fot eating anything they could get. But I reckon she killed the cats, for all of them but one were found dead round about the garden.

Not long before she left she went off to the store with two or three pair of pants and a web of cloth, with which she bought her lady a dress and some more rigging, but she brought back one pair of the pants; and the dress she got that day was not fine enough for her daughter, and she took it herself.—But the daughter had to have a finer one, so as I was going to town one day, Liza asked if she might go with me, and I told her she could. She took along with her a quantity of tallow, some butter and the pair of pants she had not sold, with which she bought another dress for her fine lady, a pair of shoes, and a heap of fine rigging, but not the wrappings of a finger for my children, as I had hoped and thought she would, as she had never given them anything from the time she came there; but I said nothing about it.

When we got home, her brother and his wife were there and Liza got after Wesley's wife to send her some help to make up the fine dress for her daughter, and Wesley's wife sent her daughter, Liza.

My boys wanted some jackets made by Sunday preaching, and in the room of making their jackets, she turns in on the dresses, and never touched a hand to the jackets, the time Liza Pittman was there helping to sew. Mary Williford, the pet of our house, in all this time was lying and sitting about—never so much as turning her hand to a thing, while her mother was in the kitchen. Liza would, after getting breakfast over, go in and make up her bed and clean up her room, and my girls would make up the balance of the beds and clean up the rest of the house; and there was that strapping Mary Williford doing nothing in the world; and when Liza left, their jackets had not been touched. On Sunday morning that this dress was made in the week, I went to the cow-pen where Liza was milking, and told her to turn the cows and calves together, for she had milked the last cow for me she ever should; and she blazed out that she did not care, for it only took another trouble off of her. I told her she had had all the benefit, if she had all the trouble, for my children had had no benefit since there she had been. No more had she ever paid old aunt Polly Pittman for milking for her, for the old lady said so just before she died.

When she was milking, she and her daughter would go and stand in the cow-pen while my children had to go through the dew and drive up the cows, and when they asked Mary Williford to go with them, she would not; and when my daughters got the chills, they said they believed it was because their step-mother drove them through the dew so much after the cows. One of them got so bad I had to send for the doctor; and I told them if they ever got up again, never to go through the grass and weeds after the cows again.

Once when Wesley Pittman's daughter was sick, Liza went to stay there some, and as my girls were picking out cotton, Liza's daughter had to cook. And one night Liza came home in a pet, and my grandson, Ruffin, who was about as ready for a fuss as she was, said at the table, that the victuals tasted like they had turpentine in them.—Liza bursted out that she had staid there and done mighty nigh as long as she was agoing to.

I was sitting in the shed door, and I told Ruffin if he did not shut his mouth, I would come in there and stamp him; and I said to Liza that if I lived and she lived, I would rid her of the troubles she had on my plantation, for I had stood it as long as I could and as long as I would. And she out with her old song that I had her there for a waiting girl for me and my children, and I told her she had waited on me about as long as she ever would. I remind-

ed her of the faithful promises she had made that she would divide with my poor motherless children, and be a mother to them as I could prove by old aunt Polly Pittman, and she need not deny it. And I asked her what was anybody's word worth who falsified their promises. She denied ever making me any promises, and said she never had done anything in her life that she was ashamed of, and I declared to her that she had spoken the truth, though it was seldom she ever did speak it. She went on to say that she and her child had no more than when she came here, though she had striven ever so hard. But she knew better, and all the neighbors knew better, as I told her. She then hit me in the teeth about writing to her about a divorce, and said now she was willing to a divorce, but I was not. I says if you are willing now, it shall be done. Then she raged out that the devil was in me—that the devil had fooled me mighty bad, but I told her she was the one the devil had fooled; that he had her on the back track then. She declared that she was not like other people; that she had never done anything that was wrong in her life, and I says you must have been born perfect, and are a saint from Heaven, and then you have none of old Adam's seed in you; but I am deceived if you are not as much struck with it as anybody I ever saw.

I told her how deeply I regretted her conduct; how it grieved me to find her bent on the wicked course

she was pursuing, and how I wished that she could see it as plain as I and others saw it. She said she did nothing wrong to anyone or anything; any of us could do wrong or let it alone, but she let all wrong things alone. I told her she was by this as she was by saying that there was no appointed time to die, or appointed time for anything else, and I says if you are right, Liza, you can live as long as you please, and die when you get ready, and if your doctrine is true, we have no use for a Saviour, and you are no hard-shell Baptist, but a free-willer. She said I had boasted that I would not swap chances with her, and I re-affirmed that I would not; nor would I with anybody else, for I have faith and hope that I have been changed from nature to grace, and I might swap it away and get nothing, as I would do if I swapped with you.

About a fortnight before this there came to my house a lousy loafer, by the name of James Dorman, and the very moment Liza saw him, she fell in love with him, and I never could tell which loved him the best, she or her daughter. He came about a couple of hours by sun in the afternoon, and made out that he was agoing about at work on clocks. I had one that had been stopped a long time. Some of the neighbors had told him about it, and he wanted to go to work on it. But I told him I did not want the clock worked on, but he would take it down; took it all to pieces, and ruined it, as he had done all the

neighbor's clocks he had touched.

That night, at supper, he told Liza who he was, and she said she had heard old aunt Polly Pittman speak of the Dormans, and he began to tell that he was raised over there among the Mabrys; and right straight Liza claimed kin with him, and it was "cousin James," with her and Mary Williford. So right after supper, they cut out with him off to old aunt Polly Pittman's, to make her acquainted with him, and let her know that one of her relations had come. But they never came in the house where I was. The next day after dinner, the daughter took him over to make him acquainted with the rest of his kin. But he was a picture for anyone to look at, wa'n't he though? His shirt was the color of Roanoke mud, as stiff as it could be, and rattled the same as if it had been paper; his old shoes were the color of a fox skin, and all to pieces at that; his stockings were as black as they could be, out at the heel, and toes gone, and the man fairly stunk. Instead of cousining him, I called him, in my mind, "stinking Jeems." Liza wanted him to pull off that old louse case of a shirt, and put on one of mine, but he would not, and it was well he did not, and let me know it.

This newly found and dearly beloved cousin of my wife's came again the following Saturday night, and after supper they all cut out again to their old aunt Polly Pittman's.—He began to show his great exploits,

dealing with the devil like Liza and her daughter. He would take a stick, give one end to one to hold, and the other to somebody else, and he would put a ring on the stick, or take it off and they holding fast to both ends of the stick. He would take a piece of money, (if he could get one) and putting it in a tumbler of water, make it dance, by singing to it and patting his feet. He told them he could take a chicken rooster, cut his head off, clean him, put him in a pot and boil him, and take him out, turn him loose and he would crow.

Liza came home that Saturday night about midnight, easing herself down in the bed, as shough she was afraid of touching me, and lay down with her back to me, without saying a word. Cousin James he got up in the morning and took himself off down to old aunt Polly Pittman's, where the lady Mary Williford was.

After breakfast awhile, Fred. Whitehead came in, my two little daughters and two grand-daughters were in the house, and the lady, Mary, sat down on the bed, and her cousin James beside her. Pretty soon she fell right down on the bed flat of her back, and cousin James he fell down on top of her, with that miserable shirt on, and I had just as lief had a dog right out of a dead horse on me as he, with that stinking shirt.

On Monday, Mary Williford told one of my children that she and her cousin James Dorman were going

to marry; that she loved him so she could not sleep for thinking of him, and that he was coming again the next Saturday night and was going to sleep in her bed, for if no one else would lie with him, she would.

In the meantime Liza had gone off to the store and got some stuff to make cousin James a shirt, and on Saturday evening he slipped up the back way, and went out under my gin-house and shedded his old lousy skin, and took the nasty thing and carried it to old aunt Polly Pittman's. During the week, while Liza was making the shirt, one of my little girls asked who it was for, but she said that was best known to herself.

On Thursday night following this we had our big fuss that made the separation: Instead of sleeping with me, Liza, as I found out afterwards, had her a pallet under the bed where cousin James slept—right at the head of mine—in the next room. She thought that I would think she was staying at old aunt Polly Pittman's, but I knew she was up and in the kitchen too early to have slept there. I asked my daughters where their mother slept. They did not know, but asked her; she said that was best known to her. She asked them if they knew, and they said they did not; and she would not tell them. I asked the boys, but they said she did not sleep up stairs. Feeling certain that she did not go out of the house,

I looked under the bed, and I found her pallet under the bed where Dorman lay. At first it struck me that she got under there to eavesdrop me; then I became satisfied from her manner, that she got under there so she could creep out and go on the bed to her James Dorman. I took the pallet and threw it under my bed, and said nothing about it.—After dinner, I gave out provisions to last my children until Sunday night, telling them I was going away to be gone until Sunday evening. Liza said she wished I would go away and never come back again. I said I knew that. I expected that when I went off that morning, that I might not come back before Sunday evening, but I returned about an hour in the night, Saturday; and when I got there, Liza had her cousin James in my room, and she and her daughter were keeping up such a whickering and whinnying over him, that I could make no one hear me until I had called four or five times.

As I went in, who should jump out first but James Dorman, and then Liza and her daughter followed. She could stay in my room with James Dorman, but not with me.—They all put off to old aunt Polly Pittman's again.

Next morning, which was Sunday, she came home, leaving her daughter and cousin James at old aunt Polly's. I went in to breakfast after awhile, saying as I went in, "after all the rest of the dogs,

in comes old Luby." Liza turned her back to me as I went in and stood there in her old place until I went out again. Her daughter had come home, and was fixed up to go off among her kindred to show them her cousin James Dorman, now that the lice were taken off of him. Liza had to fix up a lie to get my two little girls off with them; and when the largest of my children asked me if they might go to their sister Lucy's, I asked who was going to get dinner, and she said mother says she will get dinner, and I let them go. I said I thought her mother had quit doing anything, she said "no, she helps me cook."

So they went off, but never stopped at their sisters, but kept on to Wesley Pittman's instead. The lady Mary, in the room of going through the field, the usual foot way, went round through the woods along the cut path.

When they came back, I asked Ann why they did not stop at Lucy's? She said that her mother said they must go on with Mary Williford to Wesley's; that if any body saw Mary and James Dorman going alone, they would talk about it. But my grand-daughter came back, and said that Liza tried to get her off to her uncle Wesley's, but they talked about me so bad she got mad and would not go with them; that she despised them in her sight. I asked her what they said. She told me that Mary Williford told James Dorman a great mess, how I had mistreated her and

her mother, and James he said if he had a step-mother or a step-father like that, he would knock their heads off; and she said if I did not believe her, to go and ask her grandmother. I asked her grandmother, and she said that he did say it.—Then I said, I'll be d——dogged if they ever come on my plantation again, if I don't kill James Dorman, sure; and I'll whip Liza till she can't stand. I told old aunt Polly to tell her that if she was going to sign that instrument of writing, as she promised, she might go off at once and find a home for herself, and be back to my house on Monday, as I would have the documents all ready for signing by Tuesday.

Now for a few words more, suggested by that pallet. I first thought they would return that Sunday night, but somehow Liza had got wind of my expressed intention to kill Dorman, and "wear" her girl out, and they came not; and it's well enough they didn't, for I took my double-barreled gun, loaded both barrels, and took a position where I knew they would pass in returning, resolved at the moment, that if Dorman put his foot over the fence, I would shoot him down; and as for Liza and her girl, I meant to whip them as long as they could stand the punishment.

One night, about a week before she went away, Liza came into the room where I lay, undressed and got in bed. When she was fairly in, I raised my right arm and threw it over her; and as I did so, she

suddenly jumped up in bed, and began to reel and catch her breath. I spoke to her and asked her what the matter was. As she made me no answer, I took hold of her, led her to the fire-place and put her down by the fire. I then spoke to her again, saying, "Liza, what in the name of God is the matter with you?" She replied that she was dying. I begged her not to talk that way, as it hurt my feelings, but she still protested she was dying. I immediately called up one of my sons and bade him go for Dr. Strickland as fast as his horse could carry him. In the meantime I bathed her with camphor and pain-killer, and administered some of the latter internally. In a very short time the doctor came. He examined her and prescribed something which he left in a vial. I think the vial held about four table-spoonfuls. On the third day after this, the doctor again visited my house, this time to see my daughter, who was very sick. The doctor and I were sitting in the room with my daughter, when Eliza came in and handed the doctor the vial of medicine he had prescribed for herself three days before, and said, "Here, doctor, take this vial of stuff." He asked her if she had taken any of it. She replied that she had once or twice. He enquired whether it did her any good, and she replied that she did not know, but anyway she wanted him to take it back, as it would be to pay for. But the doctor told her to keep it and take

it, and I suppose it did her good for she carried it with her when she left me. After that, Dr. Strickland told three or four persons that my wife was causing me to lead a very wretched life, and that he was very sorry for me, because I was "a fine old gentleman."

After advising Liza of the instrument that I desired her to sign, she went off and remained away from me seventeen days. In this time old aunt Polly Pittman died.—After old aunt Polly's death, there were found under her bed three or four armfuls of things that Liza and her daughter had toted over there from my house. And Ruffin said that the things found under the bed were not all they had taken, for Liza had also carried off a basket of blue cotton. Upon this, I went right off to see Betsey Pittman about the blue cotton. She said the children told her that Liza had carried a basket of cotton there on Sunday evening, and put it under her bed, but as she was not there at the time, I ought not to blame her about it. I didn't tell her at the time whether I blamed her or not, but from what I am now going to say, I reckon she can guess my opinion of her: She had that cotton at her house; she never told me it was there, she therefore concealed it from me as she had other robberies of Liza's. She was a concealer, and in my opinion, there's no difference between a concealer and a thief. As to Wesley Pittman and his family, I attach no

blame to them on account of Liza's conduct, for I believe they tried as hard as I did to check her in her villainous career.

Now for what transpired during her seventeen days' absence. After she had been gone many days, I became so angry about her conduct generally, that I determined to lock my house against her, and that she should never enter it again, unless I was present to watch her. I did not intend to let her rob me and my poor motherless children any longer.

On Saturday, when I went to Whitaker's turn-out, where I advertised her, I stopped at the gate of Betsey Fountain, my wife's sister, and called her to me. When she came, I asked if she knew anything of Liza; she replied in a very angry manner that she was there, and said she had heard that I had been talking a great deal about her. I told her I had said very much about her, but nothing that was not strictly true. I further told her that her sister was a thief and a robber, and said no more.

The next day, Sunday, Liza went to Wesley Pittman's. Two of my grand-children were over there that day, and when they came home they told me who they had seen. I enquired if they asked Liza when she was coming home. They said Liza told them that she was coming by home. I enquired who was with her, and they said Gus Parks. I took it for granted that she was coming by that evening, so taking a chair and my double-barreled gun

I sought the shade of one of the oaks, about eight steps distant from where I supposed they would drive up to, and waited events. My gun contained the very same charge I put in it to shoot Dorman with, and I was resolved that when Parks drove up to forewarn him as to what the consequences would be, in the event he attempted to carry my wife from my premises, and then if he did attempt to take her off, to kill him. I never was so angry in all my life. Thank the Lord they didn't come that night. But the next morning, Liza and Parks come walking up to the gate, which is about three hundred yards from my house. Upon reaching the gate, Parks stopped, but she came on towards the house, and just before reaching it, halted and screamed out, "I have come, ready to do whatever we are going to do." I then invited her into the house to the fire. She was bloated, and I told her that she looked like a stuffed frog, swollen up as she was with the devil in her. I then called for one of the boys and told him to go for Lafayette Legget to do the writing for us. Eliza here spoke up and said "that Gus Parks was out at the gate; that he could write, and if he wasn't too big a loafer to be allowed in the house, he would do all the writing that was necessary." I told her that I didn't send for Gus Parks to do any business for me, and that so far as I was concerned, he might remain at the gate.

She said the reason she had not come back home sooner, was be-

cause when she got there, Gus Park's wife was dying, and after she was dead, her sister Betsey and Wesley Fountain were taken down sick, and she remained to wait on them. I then said to her, "Suppose I had been down sick, who was here to wait on me?" She made no reply, and I observed to her that she had not half so much respect for me as she had for my old dog. I further remarked that I had intended to give her a good whipping when she returned, but was out of that notion now. I rather thought she would ask what had put me out of this notion, but she didn't. I told her there was one thing I wished her to do, namely: when she went to her church again to have my name taken from the church books, and substitute whatever name she wanted. I didn't want her to go there in my name any longer, for if she was right I was wrong, and *vice versa*; but I was just as sure that there was wrong in Liza as that there was a God in Heaven, and I prayed to the Lord, in her presence, that she might see the sin in her sinful self before it was too late.

In a little while we separated, and now, before God, who knows the truth in our hearts, I would not have had the separation to occur for ten thousand worlds like this.

Time and again, before she left me, I had determined to go to the church and narrate my troubles, but as often would my heart fail me.—The last time she went to meeting

from my house, I was almost persuaded to go with her, and acquaint the church with her wicked conduct, but somehow my resolution failed me, and I didn't go that time. However, I did go finally. When I went, I informed the church that my wife had never treated me as a wife ought to have treated her husband. When I made this statement in the church, my wife got up to leave, I suppose, but some one caught hold of her and kept her in the church. In a short time after this, I saw the old man Jack-y Stamps, and narrated to him some of the difficulties between Liza and myself, and he advised me to see her and have a talk with her. Following his advice, I called at Wesley Fountain's, where she lived, to see her. I first saw Betsey Fountain and told her to tell Liza that I had come to have a talk with her. In a few minutes she came to me. I spoke to her in the most friendly manner in the world, but she, on her part, barely took hold of my hand. Her coldness so much affected me that I could not, for my life, keep from crying, and as the tears coursed down my furrowed cheeks, I said to her, "Liza, Lord bless your poor soul,—Lord bless your poor soul, Liza." I then told her that I had called for a friendly chat and not for a quarrel. I told her also that the doors of my house were open to her whenever she choose to return. To this, she replied, in a loud angry manner, that she would never live with me anoth-

er day of her life, because I had been saying hard things about her. She said that I had accused her of following Jim Dorman off. I replied that if she didn't follow Jim Dorman, she went off *with* him to the same place and by the same road. I then asked her how many shirts she had ever washed for me. She replied that she had washed many a one. I exclaimed, "What a pity 'tis, Liza, that you will tell such l——fibs." I said to her that when she left me, she turned her back on the best friend she ever had in her life. She proudly retorted that I was not the richest man in the world; that she had a man to stand to her back who had more money than I ever had. I replied that if she couldn't talk to me in peace and friendship, just as a wife ought to talk to her husband, I wished her never to speak to me again. Here our conversation ended.

I will now relate something about an interview I had with Mr. John Purvis, on the fourth Sunday in April, at Cotton's meeting-house. After a little joking and bantering between us, Purvis observed that some people he knew reminded him of a certain gentleman's dog. The gentleman was fond of bathing, and frequently when going into the water, would try to coax his dog in with him; but instead of following his master, this perverse canine would generally remain on the banks of the water, barking and howling for some time, and maybe at last—go in. Just so with certain human

canines in regard to the church.—They stand off for a long time, and at last, perhaps, go in. To this I replied that as for myself, I had been kept out of the still waters of the church the past six years by a snapping slut; but that the wicked creature had not deprived me of my faith in the Lord, who was the fountain of living waters.

Now I must say something as to my treatment at the hands of the church. In the lifetime of my second wife, long before I married Liza, I had been deeply concerned about the salvation of my poor soul, and felt the same concern up to the time of my marriage with Liza.—When that event occurred, I verily believed that I had secured a helpmeet both as to worldly and spiritual concerns, but the sequel proves that I was fearfully mistaken.

But to the church. Well, I went there and gave in my experience, but without avail, being rejected on account of that deceitful and desperately wicked woman. To-day I stand precisely where I did when I was rejected by the church. Poor, wretched, sinful Liza is afloat in the world, and never thinks of attending church; and I am not permitted to attend, and all on her account. May the God of all grace, for Christ's sake, pardon and forgive us all for our many misdeeds, is my humble and heartfelt prayer.

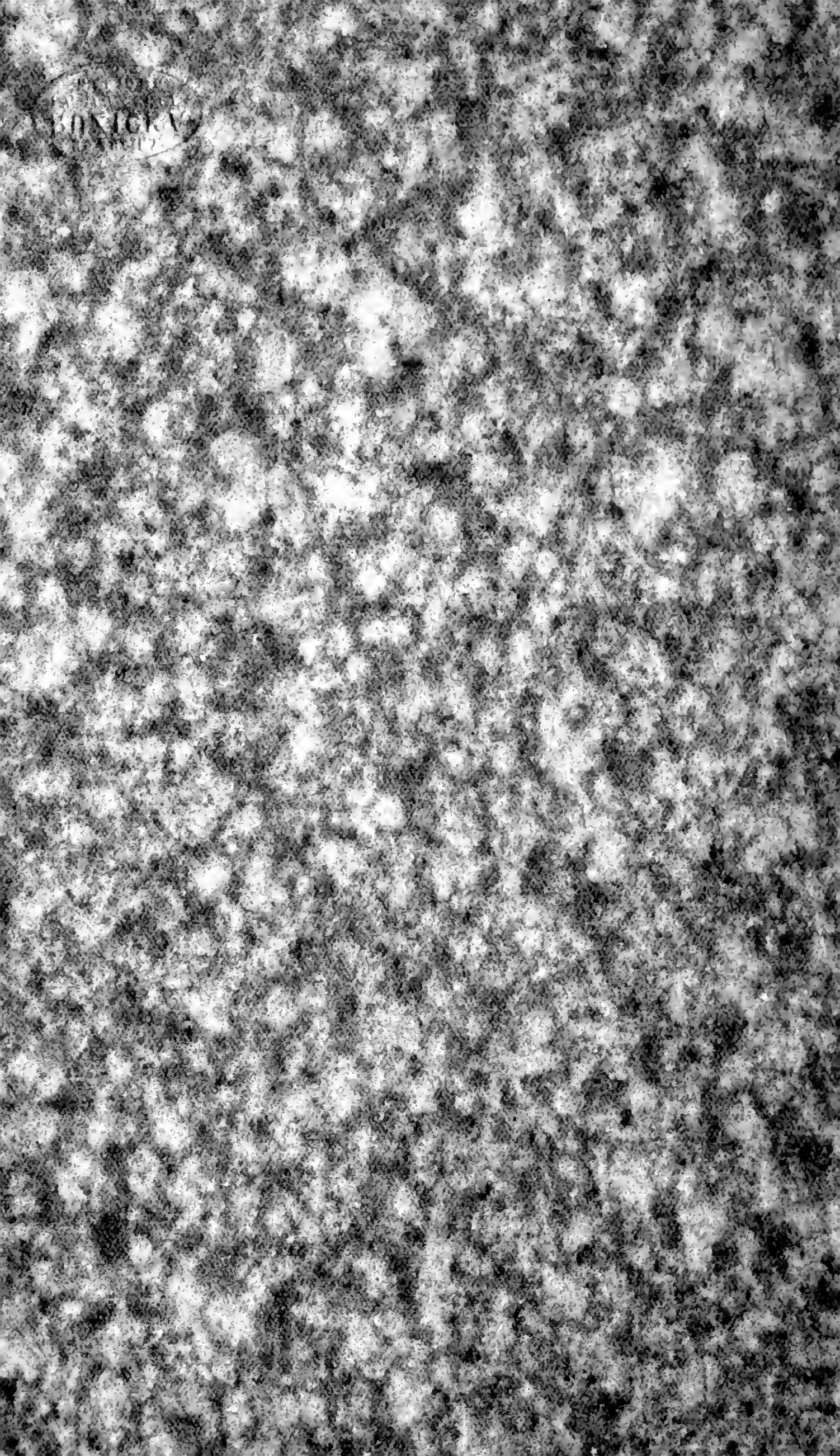
I will now make some observations on Liza's conduct after she left me: When she left my house, she went first to the neighborhood

that she had frequently visited before I married her, and lived there about twelve months. On the eve of her departure thence, she told some of her neighbors that she was going away in order to get out of hearing of me. And here I must remark, with much heartfelt reluctance, that when she left there, she took all of her meanness with her. She has forsaken her church, or I suppose she has, as I am informed that she has not been there since last August. She couldn't go to meeting, but could go up to Rocky Mount, join the Union League, and put herself in the keeping of Spencer Fountain, chief cook and bottle-washer, head and tail of the league in that section. And, by the way, Fountain makes a good thing of his connection with the league. I hear that he gets fifty cents a month from each colored member of his league, which, he says, is necessary to defray the expenses of burying the poor, and so forth. I thank the Lord that some of the colored people are beginning to find out this old wolf in sheep's clothing. As for Liza, she has found a master and mistress in this man Fountain.—Now she can “cook and do,” and they *do* say she can even *wash*, too. Methinks she acquired the latter accomplishment during her manipulations of her cousin Jim Dorman's lousy shirt. Most of Fountain's visitors are negroes; wherefore Liza's social enjoyments must be peculiarly pleasing to herself, for she always had a hankering for colored folks. In the life-time of her first

husband, who was brother to Spencer Fountain, Liza and her husband lived with Spencer for a season, and of course had the best opportunities for finding out the character of this great leaguer; and I have heard her say that he cheated his own brother out of a whole year's work and fifty dollars, too, which he had loaned him. Her statement may be true, or it may not be true; the fact is there's no telling anything in the world about it, for betwixt Liza and Spencer Fountain, there's precious little difference, and I should say it is pull Dick, pull devil with them, as to which is the meanest, for they both belong to the Union League, which evidently comes from the devil; and what comes from his satanic majesty must at some time return to that individual.

I have now done. In this book I have been compelled to make known many things I could have wished to keep within the sacred precincts of my family circle, but no other course has been left me, and repeating the assertion that I have not been moved to this by any other feeling than a deep sense of justice to myself and children, I give this much of my life's history to the public, praying the indulgence of men wherein I have overstepped the bounds of propriety; and freely acknowledging the many errors and sins of my life, I rest my case with justice, and resign myself to my God, who must at last judge and reward me according to my deeds and deserts.

THE END.



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